



SAFETY IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GAP TRAIL CROSSING WITH SR 0136

March 2021

Amended October 2021



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Executive Summary

The Greater Allegheny Passage (GAP) Trail extends from Homestead, PA to Connellsville, PA and crosses SR 0136 approximately 100-ft west of the West Newton Bridge and near the intersection of Collinsburg Road with SR 0136. SR 0136 is a heavily traveled route and features an ADT of 8,200 VPD with 4% trucks with a 25 MPH speed limit. Based on traffic counts from 2017, approximately 300 bicycle trips per weekday and 600 bicycle trips per weekend day utilize the GAP trail. With high vehicular traffic volumes on SR 0136 and multimodal traffic on the GAP trail, providing a safe crossing for the pedestrians and bicyclists utilizing this trail is a critical safety improvement for the overall West Newton Bridge Project.

TranSystems attended a Stakeholder Meeting on 10/31/18 and discussed the GAP Trail crossing with the Regional Trail Corporation (RTC), the owner and manager of the GAP Trail. During the meeting, the RTC stated that high vehicular travel speeds along SR 0136 are a safety issue and that drivers pay little-to-no attention to the existing signage related to the trail crossing.

Because of the concerns raised during the meeting, TranSystems was tasked with development of a study to investigate options to improve the safety of the GAP Trail crossing of SR 0136. The improvements identified within this plan include the following:

- ▶ Traffic calming methods and devices;
- ▶ Multimodal roadway improvements including: intersection upgrades, streetscaping, shared lane markings, ADA facility improvements, active pedestrian and bicycle signage, sidewalk completion and connectivity, other signage and pavement markings, and other various multimodal and safety improvements; and
- ▶ A bike and pedestrian signage wayfinding plan to provide destinations and routes for pedestrians and bicyclists on the GAP Trail. TranSystems will further investigate incorporating a kiosk as discussed during PennDOT Connects meeting.

There is an added Implementation Section based on project updates at the end of this report.

Existing Conditions

Current Multimodal Deficiencies

- A. The existing Allegheny GAP Trail stop signs are weathered and faded. The current crosswalk pavement markings at Collinsburg Road and SR 0136 are worn and faded providing an unsafe condition for crossing pedestrians and bicyclists. There is existing roadway high pressure sodium vapor (HPS) lighting at both approaches of the GAP Trail crossing, however it needs to be analyzed to determine whether the light levels meet Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) guidelines for pedestrian crosswalks.
- B. There is a lack of bicycle facilities (signage, pavement markings, parking, etc.) connecting downtown West Newton and the surrounding community amenities to the GAP Trailhead.
- C. There are existing sidewalks along portions of SR 0136; however, sidewalks and ADA facilities are missing just west of the Collinsburg Road and SR 0136 intersection providing an unsafe condition for pedestrians wanting to cross Collinsburg Rd to access the GAP Trail or the plaza.

Photos of Existing Corridor / Segment



Stakeholder Outreach

Stakeholder outreach was accomplished through the following:

- ▶ March 13th, 2018 PennDOT Connects Meeting
- ▶ October 31st, 2018 Stakeholder Meeting with Regional Trail Corporation
- ▶ September 27th, 2021 Stakeholder Meeting with Regional Trail Corporation and West Newton

Meeting information can be found in the Appendix.

Potential Improvements

Below is list of various conceptual multimodal improvement options consisting of an overall location map (for the analyzed road segment), existing deficiencies, proposed improvements, and renderings of the proposed improvements. Each of these conceptual multimodal improvements are in accordance with the latest guidelines including the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bike Facilities, the AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, PennDOT publications, and MUTCD. TranSystems also reviewed and considered potential countermeasures outlined in the FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations, including those outlined in the following excerpt below:

Roadway Configuration	Posted Speed Limit and AADT								
	Vehicle AADT <9,000			Vehicle AADT 9,000–15,000			Vehicle AADT >15,000		
	≤30 mph	35 mph	≥40 mph	≤30 mph	35 mph	≥40 mph	≤30 mph	35 mph	≥40 mph
2 lanes (1 lane in each direction)	① 2 4 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 ⑦ ⑨	① 4 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 ⑦ ⑨	① 4 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 7 9	① 5 6 ⑨
3 lanes with raised median (1 lane in each direction)	① 2 3 4 5 7 9	① ③ 5 7 9	① ③ 5 ⑦ ⑨	① 3 4 5 7 9	① ③ 5 ⑦ ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑦ ⑨	① ③ 4 5 7 9	① ③ 5 ⑦ ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑨
3 lanes w/o raised median (1 lane in each direction with a two-way left-turn lane)	① 2 3 4 5 6 7 9	① ③ 5 6 7 9	① ③ 5 6 ⑨	① 3 4 5 6 7 9	① ③ 5 6 ⑦ ⑨	① ③ 5 6 ⑨	① ③ 4 5 6 7 9	① ③ 5 6 ⑨	① ③ 5 6 ⑨
4+ lanes with raised median (2 or more lanes in each direction)	① ③ 5 7 8 9	① ③ 5 7 8 9	① ③ 5 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 7 8 9	① ③ 5 ⑦ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑦ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 8 ⑨
4+ lanes w/o raised median (2 or more lanes in each direction)	① ③ 5 6 7 8 9	① ③ 5 ⑥ 7 8 9	① ③ 5 ⑥ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑥ 7 8 9	① ③ 5 ⑥ ⑦ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑥ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑥ ⑦ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑥ 8 ⑨	① ③ 5 ⑥ 8 ⑨
<p>Given the set of conditions in a cell,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # Signifies that the countermeasure is a candidate treatment at a marked uncontrolled crossing location. ● Signifies that the countermeasure should always be considered, but not mandated or required, based upon engineering judgment at a marked uncontrolled crossing location. ○ Signifies that crosswalk visibility enhancements should always occur in conjunction with other identified countermeasures.* <p>The absence of a number signifies that the countermeasure is generally not an appropriate treatment, but exceptions may be considered following engineering judgment.</p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 High-visibility crosswalk markings, parking restrictions on crosswalk approach, adequate nighttime lighting levels, and crossing warning signs 2 Raised crosswalk 3 Advance Yield Here To (Stop Here For) Pedestrians sign and yield (stop) line 4 In-Street Pedestrian Crossing sign 5 Curb extension 6 Pedestrian refuge island 7 Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon (RRFB)** 8 Road Diet 9 Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB)** 				



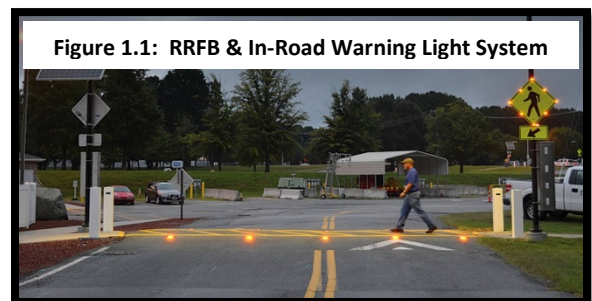
Recommendations

Bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements recommended for a safer multimodal access, connectivity and mobility include the following concepts:

- ▶ Traffic calming devices and options
- ▶ Pedestrian and bicycle signage and options
- ▶ Pavement markings
- ▶ Sidewalk improvements

Traffic Calming Devices and Options

- A. Remove the existing overhead pedestrian / bicycle crossing warning lights located just west of the West Newton Bridge prior to approaching the Allegheny GAP Trail crossing and install solar powered rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) on both sides of the GAP Trail road crossing with optional in-road flashing beacons (Figure 1.1). See Figures 1.4 and 1.5 below for a rendering and an example of the RRFB configuration. These devices increase visibility and awareness of crossing pedestrians and cyclists to oncoming motorists. In addition to installing rectangular rapid flashing beacons at the trail crossing, there are a couple of options that can be included to increase safety of traversing pedestrians and perform as a traffic calming measure.





Crosswalk Option 1

Install advanced yield markings along SR 0136 on both the westbound and eastbound approaches of the GAP Trail crossing (see Figure 1.4 below). These are “sharks teeth” yield markings placed 20 to 50 feet in advance of a marked crosswalk to indicate where vehicles are required to yield or stop in compliance with accompanying “Yield Here to Pedestrians” signs R1-5 or R1-5a. This countermeasure improves the visibility and awareness of pedestrians and cyclists to approaching motorists and discourages motorists from stopping too close to the crosswalk. This also gives the crossing pedestrians and cyclists additional time to take action if the vehicle does not yield.

Crosswalk Option 2

Convert the GAP Trail crossing at SR 0136 into a raised crosswalk as shown in Figure 1.2. Raised crosswalks are ramped speed tables spanning the entire width of the roadway. The crosswalk is demarcated with paint and/or special paving materials. Raised crosswalks reduce vehicular speeds and enhance the pedestrian and bicycle crossing environment by bringing awareness of pedestrians to the motorists. The profile of the raised crosswalk would need further evaluation and investigation to accommodate heavy vehicles and snow plows.



Figure 1.2: Raised Crosswalk

- B. Install speed feedback signs (dynamic speed displays) providing drivers with feedback about their speed in relationship to the posted speed limit. Speed feedback signs accompanied with police enforcement can be an effective method for reducing speeds at a desired location.
- C. Perform a photometric lighting analysis to determine whether the current light levels meet the Illuminating Engineering Societies (IES) guidelines for pedestrian crosswalks. Providing the correct amount of lighting increases the safety and awareness of crossing pedestrians to oncoming motorists.
- D. Install fluorescent yellow-green signs or stripes on sign posts.
- E. Install rumble strips for vehicles traveling in the eastbound direction. Due to the proximity of the GAP Trail crossing to the West Newton Bridge, rumble strips are not anticipated for vehicles traveling in the westbound direction.

Pavement Markings

- A. Update the pedestrian crosswalk pavement markings across Collinsburg Road at the intersection of Collinsburg Road and SR 0136.
- B. Install shared lane markings along SR 0136 to provide bicyclists a route to access downtown West Newton and the GAP Trail for the surrounding residents. Place “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” signage along the new shared lane markings path on SR 0136 to make motorists aware of bicycle traffic.



Option 1

Continue the shared lane markings across the West Newton Bridge giving a route for bicyclists to access downtown West Newton.

Option 2

Install “Walk Your Bike” signs for bicyclists on both ends of the West Newton Bridge to give bicyclists direction to dismount and walk your bikes on the sidewalk.

- C. Install pavement legends to warn of the impending stop at the crossing approaching the GAP Trail.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Signage

- A. Replace the existing worn and faded GAP Trail stop signs with new stop signs alerting pedestrians and bicyclists of the approaching road crossing.
- B. Place “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” signage along the new shared lane markings path on SR 0136 to make motorists aware of bicycle traffic.
- C. Install MUTCD approved signage along SR 0136 to alert motorists of approaching pedestrian and bicycle crossing ahead (W11-15 and W16-9p).
- D. As an option, install dismount gates at the trailhead. This forces the bicyclists to stop, dismount, and walk alongside their bicycle as they cross the road. However, currently there are multiple areas as you approach the SR 0136 crossing where a bicyclist could deviate around the dismount gates unless these open areas are closed up.

Sidewalk Improvements

- A. Update the sidewalks to include ADA ramps at the Collinsburg Road and SR 0136 intersection and install a sidewalk connection from the Collinsburg Road to the GAP Trail. Additional right-of-way will be required to install the proposed sidewalk improvements along the north side of SR 0136 between Collinsburg Road and the Rite Aid parking lot entrance. Figure 1.3 below shows a depiction of the proposed sidewalk improvements and the existing ROW lines.

Miscellaneous

A new version of the MUTCD is currently in development. A draft version was recently posted in December 2020 for review and comment. TranSystems will monitor development of this updated manual and will reevaluate the recommendations above as required.

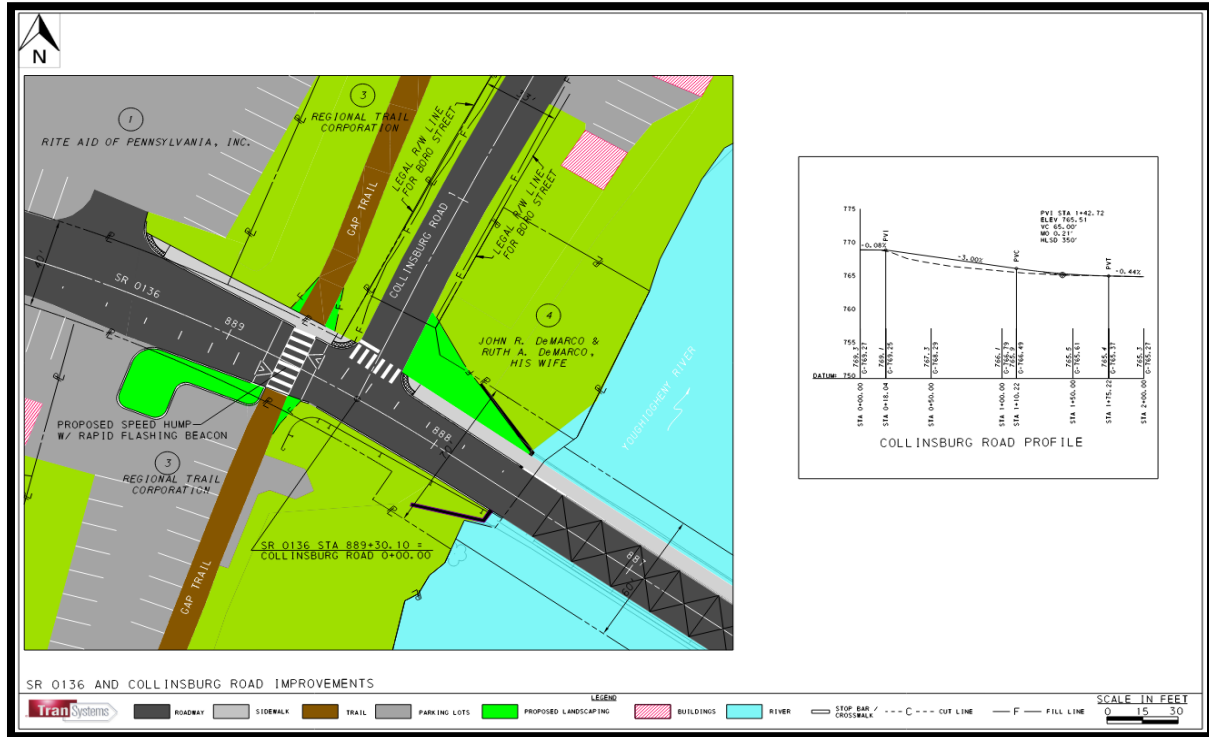


Figure 1.3: SR 0136 and Collinsburg Road Improvements



Figure 1.4: West Newton Bridge GAP Rendering (eastbound)



Figure 1.5: Collinsburg Road Crosswalk Rendering (southbound)

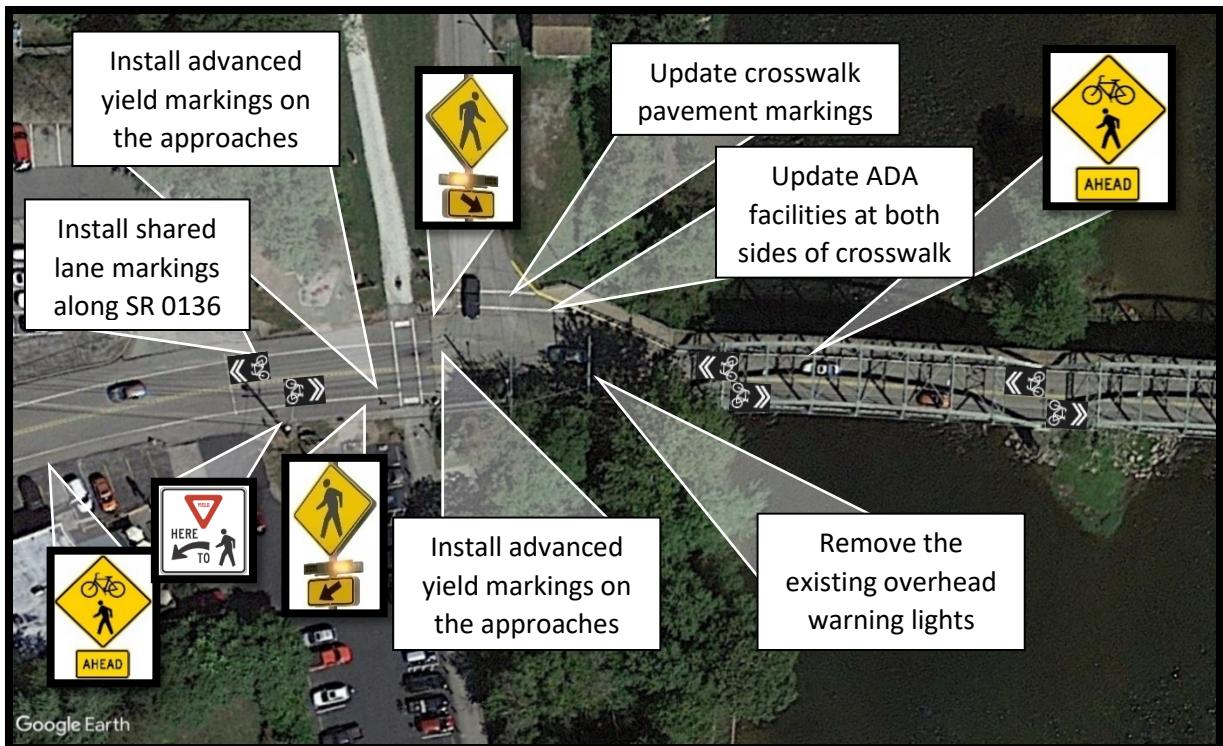


Figure 1.6: Overview Map of Improvements

Bike and Pedestrian Signage Plan

The signage and pavement marking plan should follow AASHTO, MUTCD and PennDOT Design Guidelines for the Development of Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities. The signage and pavement markings should include, at a minimum, way-finding signs, route signage, regulatory signage, warning signage, specific right-of-way signs, directional signs, etc.

Pavement markings should be intended to designate a specific right-of-way, direction of travel, potential conflict areas, route options, etc. These markings should take into consideration the use of particular colors, materials, and designs, as well as the legibility of these elements for motorists and pedestrians. Markings may be used to augment a particular lane, intersection, or signal treatment. In all cases, markings must strive for a high level of visibility, instant identification, and most importantly, take into account both motorist and bicyclist movements in relation to the placement of the marking.

A bike and pedestrian signage plan could be utilized for several destinations in downtown West Newton as well as to provide directional and destination points for multimodal users on the GAP Trail. This was a highlight from the PennDOT Connects Meeting in which a kiosk was discussed to provide a directory of businesses.



The RRFB consists of the following:

- Solar-assisted battery-powered system
- Trail crossing signs W11-15, W11-15P, and W16-7
- Two arrays of large LED modules (flashing signals) for motorists
- Side-mounted flashing signals for pedestrians, concurrent with LED flashing signals for motorists
- Wig-wag flashing pattern specified in the MUTCD
- Push-button activation (ADA-compliant) and R10-25 sign

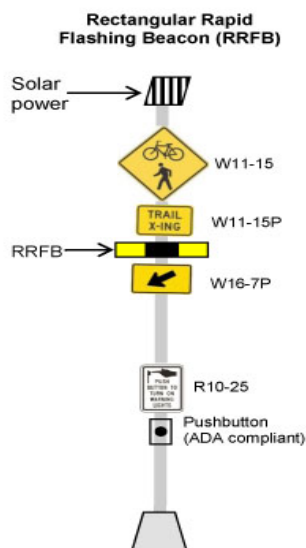


Figure 1.7: Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon Configuration



Implementation (10-2021)

TranSystems submitted this report to PennDOT on 4-5-2021 for review, comment and approval. Based on follow up discussions with PennDOT (email correspondence attached), there were preferred recommendations from the above list. TranSystems then proceeded with a follow up in-person meeting with PennDOT, Regional Trail Corporation, and West Newton Borough on 9-27-2021, these minutes are attached.

The following list are the recommended improvements that TranSystems will advance into the final design stage for the West Newton Bridge Rehabilitation Project for the GAP Trail / SR 136 Crossing:

- Advanced bicycle signage on both SR 136 roadway approaches
- Shared lane markings on both SR 136 roadway approaches
- Advanced yield markings and yield signs on both SR 136 roadway approaches
- Updated crosswalk pavement markings and ADA facilities
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFSs) on each shoulder (self-actuated and solar powered)
- Gateway treatments that features R1-6 yield signs at both ends of the crosswalk and a flexible delineator post or R1-6 yield sign between the travel lanes (located on the double yellow lines)
- Updated crosswalk and ADA facilities across Collinsburg Road

Next Steps (2021-2022)

- ✓ Investigate impacts and determine the length and location of the sidewalk extension.
- ✓ Incorporate above signage and pavement markings into Preliminary Signing and Pavement Markings Plans (Preliminary Design)
- ✓ Provide cost estimate of above items in Final Design as well as any necessary specifications
- ✓ Incorporate all above items from Implementation Section into Final Design Package
- ✓ Conduct Final Design Meeting with stakeholders to review items and plans prior to construction



Appendix



PENNDOT CONNECTS MEETING 3-13-2018



CO. _____ SHEET NO. 1 OF 3
S.R. _____ SUBJECT _____ BY _____ DATE 3/13/18
SEG. _____ OFFSET _____ CHKD. BY _____ DATE _____

3/13/18 PENNDOT CONNECTS MEETING 136 LID West Newton BR
with Mayor, Secretary and Berwyn Council

- GAVE UPDATE OF WORK COMPLETED AND next steps including stakeholder and consulting party meetings
- REGARDING STAKEHOLDERS indicated we would involve or solicit their help in developing TNA LIST. These folks would help direct project for eventual future public meetings. They suggested NUTRITION INC.

SAFETY ISSUES - AS TRAILS continue to develop they would like to see better access for BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS ACROSS BRIDGE. THEY UNDERSTAND WE COULD NOT DESIGNATE SPECIFIC BIKE LANE ON EXISTING BRIDGE BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE BETTER SIGNING TO PROMOTE BIKES USING LANE. Ideally they would like to have BIKE LANE BUT THAT IS CHALLENGE.

- FELT existing inlet grates not BICYCLE safe would like to see that change.

DISCUSSED past project that DOWNTOWN WEST NEWTON INC HAD PURSUED IN 2009 THAT INCLUDED A GATEWAY SIGN AND RIBBON RAILING. THEY COULD PROVIDE BLUE PRINTS BUT I INDICATED WE COULD OBTAIN THOSE THROUGH GANNETT FLEMING. THEY WOULD LIKE GATEWAY ATTACHED TO BRIDGE BUT WE NOTED THAT WAS ISSUE WITH BRIDGE UNIT AND COULD ALSO BE FROM HISTORIC STRUCTURE VIEW.



CO. _____ SHEET NO. 2 OF 3
S.R. _____ SUBJECT 136 CIO PennDOT BY _____ DATE 3/13/18
SEG. _____ OFFSET Connects CHKD. BY _____ DATE _____

They felt strongly the star on bridge should ~~remain~~ remain

- They would like to see a kiosk that would allow someone with a phone could click ~~on~~ on to find out where businesses are. We could incorporate this but they would need to secure funding through grants

SPC was present and felt Borough needs community vision plan. They can help apply for grants for doing that planning. Grants take into account safety and national trail so those work in Borough's favor.

Dept of Community Development → can apply for grants through them to ^{hire} ~~hire~~ engineer to complete this vision. SPC suggested follow-up workshop. These grants require Borough participation.

Borough would like to improve visibility of trail crossing on west side of bridge. Felt current overhead sign not as visible as it could be.

Drainage - did work along outfalls. Sewers on west side are separated. On east side some are some are not.

Said there is pending issue on west side near Rite Aid. Also on east but was not clear. Will have 12-5 maint discuss this with Borough street foreman.



CO. _____ SHEET NO. 3 OF 3
S.R. _____ SUBJECT 136 C/O PENNDOT BY _____ DATE 3/13/18
SEG. _____ OFFSET CONNECTS MTS CHKD. BY _____ DATE _____

UTILITIES

NOT AWARE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITIES NEAR BRIDGE

Borough would like to direct more people to their swimming pool. BUT it is GOOD WAYS AWAY NOTED THEY HAVE PARK THAT HAS POND AND WALKING TRAIL

~~Simeral~~ Simeral SQUARE → TRYING TO HAVE EVENTS THERE BUT PARKING IS ISSUE. ALSO VERY HOT IN SUMMER SO PLANTING TREES.

WE DISCUSSED THAT EITHER REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT WILL REQUIRE SPACE TO COMPLETE WORK
THEY ASKED IF REPLACEMENT WOULD BE OFF LINE AND I NOTED THAT WE ARE THREADING A NEEDLE TO GET BETWEEN ~~THE~~ BUILDINGS ON MAIN STREET I EMPHASIZED WE HAD MADE NO ~~DECISION~~ ^{POINT} DECISION ON REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT THAT IS ~~POINT~~ OF PROCESS AND WE DO NOT KNOW TRAFFIC CONTROL WOULD BE REQUIRED

WOULD LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED LIGHTING ON BRIDGE AND ESPECIALLY FOR PEDESTRIANS WE DISCUSSED MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR BOTH SIDEWALK AND LIGHTING.

WOULD LIKE TO SEE SKID RESISTANT SURFACES FOR PEDESTRIANS AND ROAD

EMPHASIZED NEED FOR GOOD DRAINAGE ON BRIDGE AS OLD BRIDGE USED TO HAVE OPEN DECK.



STAKEHOLDER MEETING

10-31-2018



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**WEST NEWTON BRIDGE
ECMS #E03885; BMS # 64-0136-0050-1938
SR 0136 OVER YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER IN WEST NEWTON BOROUGH, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA
STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES**

DATE/TIME: October 31, 2018
PLACE: Regional Trail Corporation Office, West Newton, PA
AUTHOR: TranSystems

ATTENDEES: Please see attached sign-in sheet for contact information.

Barry Lyons – PennDOT
Brian Krul – TranSystems
Ben Markle – Downtown West Newton Inc (8AM)
Mark Bowers – Downtown West Newton Inc (8AM)
Leslie Pierce – Regional Trail Corporation (9:30AM)
Bo Hunker – Nutrition Group Inc (10:30AM)
Michael Binge – West Newton Giant Eagle (Meeting at Giant Eagle at 1PM)

PURPOSE:

Stakeholder meetings were held throughout the day on Wednesday October 31, 2018 with various organizations and companies within West Newton Borough to discuss the West Newton Bridge Project. The meetings were intended to engage with these various stakeholders and see what concerns and issues there are within their respective organizations and companies as well as providing them an update on the West Newton Bridge Project, schedule and upcoming tasks.

An agenda was distributed at each meeting and both Barry and Brian discussed the project specifics with each stakeholder. Below are the issues and comments that were identified for each meeting:

DOWNTOWN WEST NEWTON INC.)

- Downtown West Newton Inc (DWNI) is a non-profit, community development corporation with a mission to promote activity and spark investment in downtown West Newton, PA. Their mission is to help West Newton's downtown by stabilizing the economy, enhancing assets, and encouraging development, while preserving West Newton's unique charm. DWNI is located at 201 East Main Street, West Newton and they have developed a strategy for enhancing the downtown:
 - create attractive entrances into downtown
 - improve the look of the trailhead and riverfront
 - create better access from the trail into downtown
 - support businesses and attract new businesses and customers
 - improve parking and traffic flow
 - promote our unique historic, scenic and cultural assets.

- Ben Markle stated that Simeral Square (an old gas station located at the NE corner of the bridge) is owned and maintained by DWNl. They would like to turn it over to West Newton Borough to have them maintain it but there appears to be limited interest from the Borough to take over ownership.
 - This is likely an environmental 4f property, but needs verification as such.
 - DWNl requested pedestrian improvements within this area such as better ADA access, ADA facilities and sidewalk upgrades. As a follow up to this meeting, the District verified that even if Simeral Square is a 4f property, these pedestrian improvements can occur without an effect to the property. DWNl also would like some improvements for the pedestrian access from the bridge and would not be adverse to any property acquisition for this purpose.
 - TranSystems is to follow up and obtain the Simeral Square design drawings from Gannett Fleming to see what type of impacts there will be to any of the existing walls.
 - The District also followed up and asked for more details on various grants and years of the grants DWNl used to acquire the land to complete the construction of Simeral Square. DWNl stated that PA Department of Community & Economic Development Grant was used for acquiring the land and DCNR for part of the construction.
- DWNl received a wayfinding and tourism grant for \$25K (2007-2008) and completed the fabrication and installation for \$15K from a local company (Contemporary Design). DWNl was told that they could not put the wayfinding signs on state routes.
 - Ben followed up with an email of the two projects they worked on including the sign program.
 - Barry shared this information with the Traffic Unit to see if these signs are no longer allowed and also to provide a contact for further information and clarification.
- The District inquired that DWNl keep us posted on the West Newton Rotary's coordination with DCNR on placing a 3 x 5 foot electronic sign on the Simeral Square property.
- DWNl has requested that we investigate the following items:
 - A new sidewalk in front of Rite Aid to connect to the existing sidewalk at Collinsburg Road.
 - Investigate traffic calming measures – both gentlemen stated that traffic speeds tend to be high entering the bridge from the west.
 - Look into various artwork on the railings – this was part of an old preservation project that never got constructed.
 - The 10-Ton weight limit ordinance at the top of SR 136 east of West Newton Bridge: they felt that this was not obeyed and that larger trucks and buses frequently travel down this hill (thus violating the ordinance). They mentioned this sign was installed due to a bad accident dating back to the 1940's to 1950's. Barry stated that he believes this is a West Newton Borough ordinance and sign and does not believe anyone at the District will recall when this sign was installed. TranSystems will investigate this further with the Borough to verify the origin and ownership.

REGIONAL TRAIL CORPORATION – WEST NEWTON

- The mission of the Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) is to acquire, develop, manage and maintain appropriate trail and water corridors within southwestern PA in partnership with local trail chapters and councils to promote opportunities for recreation, volunteerism, education, tourism, economic

development, and historic and environmental conservation. West Newton Station is the Office and Visitors Center of the RTC, which owns and manages the Great Allegheny Passage from Homestead to Connellsville. RTC is located on 111 Collinsburg Road, West Newton.

- Leslie inquired about the schedule and if there would be any trail impacts during construction and any signage needed for detours during construction. After the meeting, Barry and Brian field verified that there would be minimal trail impacts during construction, but further investigation would be required as to the final alternative and associated impacts. Proper signage and detours will be placed during construction if there are any impacts.
- Leslie mentioned that she thought speed was an issue on SR 136 and that drivers do not pay attention to the signs. However, per our conversation she was not aware of any crossing incidents.
- Recent bicycle and pedestrian counts on the trail were discussed. Brian to follow up and send Leslie that latest trails counts from PennDOT and from TranSystems subconsultant. (*Counts sent on 11/5/2018*)
- Leslie stated her number 1 issue was safety at the trail crossing with SR 136 and inquired about either a tunnel under SR 136, or a pedestrian overpass. Barry stated that both options would be very costly and have several impacts to the adjacent community and businesses as this would essentially bypass the area. She concurred. Better and safer crossing techniques and applications were discussed such as actuated flashing, overhead pedestrian and bike crossing signals, dismount gates and railings, raised crosswalks, and lighted crosswalks among others. TranSystems will provide a thorough review of recently used and approved safe pedestrian and bike crossing means and offer several solutions to the District for approval and implementation.

THE NUTRITION GROUP

- The Nutrition Group offers extensive experience in food service and facilities management, providing the products, programs, services and support for various organizations. Specifically, they provide food delivery services to K-12 schools, senior programs, early childhood programs, healthcare facilities, summer feeding programs and correctional facilities. They have an office located at 202 South Third Street, West Newton.
- Bo Hunker detailed the delivery trucks they currently utilize for their food services which include a variety of tractor trailer trucks that make several weekly deliveries utilizing the West Newton Bridge. Overall they receive 3 to 4 daily deliveries with tractor trailers. Per Bo they received 3 to 4 weekly tractor trailer deliveries from Reinhart who is located near former Sony Plant near 119/West Tech Interchange. Also they receive 2 weekly deliveries from Turner Dairy who is in Blawnox and 1 to 2 weekly deliveries from Jordan Banana who is in Dravosburg. Finally they get deliveries from Lipardi located in New Stanton. So, half come from south (New Stanton/Mt Pleasant) and half from North (Pittsburgh).
- The Nutrition Group also utilizes several box trucks (approximately 6 tons) that make deliveries.
- Bo mentioned that the SR 136 10-Ton weight limit ordinance is often ignored and was curious if this was still needed. TranSystems will be investigating the sign ordinance and its origin.
- Bo wants to be in the loop on detour routes and schedules as to when the bridge will be closed.



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GIANT EAGLE OF WEST NEWTON

- Giant Eagle is a grocery chain and has the need for multiple food deliveries throughout the week. Giant Eagle is located at 105 Robertson Street, West Newton.
- Michael detailed the delivery trucks they currently utilize for their food deliveries which included mostly tractor trailers that make daily and multiple weekly deliveries for various food and groceries. These trucks utilize the West Newton Bridge. He noted trucks come across West Newton Bridge and then make the left onto Water Street to access the store. If the bridge is closed, deliveries could come in from PA 51 at Route 48. He noted most Giant Eagle deliveries come from Pittsburgh, but they do get deliveries from others for dairy, Pepsi, snack foods, bread etc.
- Michael is very concerned with the bridge being out of service for extended periods of time, more so for business than delivery purposes. He noted that when the bridge closed back 2011 they had 8-10% drop in business. But he noted overall, they are seeing a drop in business of 5-10% for a variety of reasons.
- Michael wants to be in the loop on detour routes and schedules as to when the bridge will be closed.

After the meetings, Barry and Brian drove several detour routes to see what the existing issues were with these various routes. These routes will be further evaluated as part of the traffic control task of the project.

OTHER

- Brian Krul had a telephone discussion with Jeff Bayila of Arc Weld Inc (135 S 2nd Avenue, West Newton) on 10-30-2018 regarding their local deliveries and how they would be impacted by the bridge closing. Jeff has a few deliveries that may be impacted, but they would follow the detour. Jeff did not feel a meeting was necessary but wanted to be informed of any upcoming meetings and bridge closures / detours as the project gets closer to construction.
- Brian Krul had a telephone discussion with Chris Suchko of Contemporary Design (130 S 2nd Street, West Newton) on 10-26-2018 regarding their local deliveries and how they would be impacted by the bridge closing. Chris only has a few tractor trailers that transport metals and would utilize a detour route through Sutersville. Chris did mention the SR 136 10-Ton weight limit restriction to see if that could be lifted to make the travel routes easier for his drivers – he thought this ordinance was outdated and mostly ignored by truck drivers. Chris did not feel a meeting was necessary and asked to be updated on the project schedule.

I believe these minutes accurately reflect the items discussed at the subject meeting. If there are any revisions or corrections to these minutes, please contact the undersigned within ten (10) days of receipt of these minutes. If no revisions or corrections are requested, the minutes will stand approved as submitted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian A. Krul".

Brian A. Krul, PE, PTOE

Name	Organization	Phone Number	E-mail Address
Ben Markle	Downtown West Newton, Inc.	724-552-6373	BenMarkle@gmail.com
MARK BEWEAS	DWNL	724-454-4012	markd955@gmail.com
LESLIE HERRE	REGIOVAL TRAIN CORP.	724-872-5536	REGIOVAL TRAIN CORP. @COMCAST.NET
BO HUNKER	NUTRITION GROUP INC	724-344-3492	RHUNKER@THE NUTRITION GROUP, INC
MICHAEL BINGEY	OE	724-872-5443	MICHAEL.BINGEY@GIANT EAGLE.COM



EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

From: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Sent: Mon 6/14/2021 4:37 PM
To: Brian A. Krul <bakrul@transystems.com>
Subject: RE: West Newton GAP Trail Crossing

Brian:

Didn't forget about this email. In some follow up with District Traffic Engineer we want to consider the Pedestrian Gateway idea and could include that and any potential pavement markings as part of the flashing warning device permit. Per Bryan we could stipulate the pedestrian gateway ideas be removed between November 1 and April 1 and responsibility for that rest with Borough. Bryan did weigh in that he did not like the idea of curb bump outs. Its not that they don't work its just that they would be a maintenance concern in terms of snow plowing which I surely can understand.

I agree the next step is a meeting to talk to Borough and Leslie from trail about our ideas to improve visibility of the SR 136 trail crossing. I think it needs to be a joint meeting involving both groups.

I think we could look at something in July for a meeting. I am sure schedule will fill in but right now I am pretty much clear except for 7/15, 7/21 and 7/26. We also have calls on Tuesday and Thursday but I can miss those if needed.

From: Brian A. Krul <bakrul@transystems.com>
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 1:26 PM
To: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Subject: RE: [External] West Newton GAP Trail Crossing

Barry – it would appear the next step is to meet with the Boro and Regional Trail Corp to review these potential solutions. Perhaps something like you and I did a few years ago. We could look at some dates and have back to back meetings in the next month or so. I can set up if we can narrow in on a few weeks in the summer. LMK – thanks

Brian

From: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 8:43 PM
To: Brian A. Krul <bakrul@transystems.com>
Subject: RE: [External] West Newton GAP Trail Crossing

Brian: In response to your April 5th submission, District Traffic Engineer Bryan Walker has completed his review of your submission on improvements to the GAP trail crossing on SR 136. As you will see, Bryan feels the ideas on sheet 9 and 10 which include improved signage, pavement markings, advance pavement legends, and pedestrian actuated RRFB can be pursued. In addition we may want to look into pedestrian gateway treatments which are discussed in my email back to Bryan below. As I noted in my email, we have some good ideas to discuss with Borough and Trail that will improve the trail crossing.

Barry

From: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 8:35 PM
To: Walker, Bryan P <brywalker@pa.gov>
Cc: Zarichnak, Emily <emzarichna@pa.gov>
Subject: RE: SR136 C10 (West Newton Bridge) - Flashing Warning Device

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Bryan:

I have no issues sharing that we are looking at this as part of the West Newton Bridge Project. I also don't mind if you share what we are looking at but I would emphasize we are at the investigation stage and would need to coordinate with the trail and Borough on this.

Also thank you for your response on the TranSystems submission. I agree we don't want to get too crazy and I like the idea of the flashing warning device at the crosswalk and the additional pavement markings. Also, I recently took a AASHTO webinar on Pedestrian Gateway Treatments (GT). Per AASHTO, the Gateway Treatment is a pedestrian crossing configuration that features R1-6 yield signs at both ends of the crosswalk and a flexible delineator post or R1-6 yield sign in between travel lanes. Two studies have been conducted to evaluate the GT's effectiveness. The first study focused on initial effectiveness and the second studied effectiveness over time. Both studies showed the treatment was highly effective, even over a 6-month period. Overall, results indicate a 70% to 90% compliance rate on roads with posted speeds of 30 mph or lower with average daily traffic (ADT) of up to 25,000 vehicles. The treatment also had a traffic-calming effect, leading to speed reductions of between 4 and 10 mph, even when pedestrians were not present. Below are a couple pictures from the presentation.



Crossing

Full Gateway Treatment



Gateway Treatment with City Post

For West Newton we could possibly look at doing this in conjunction with some type of curb extension at the crossing and then supplement it with both the flashing warning devices at the edge of road and pavement markings on SR 136. Or we could just eliminate the flashing warning devices and go with what is shown in pictures above. Obviously something we would want to meet with trail and Borough on to get their input as one of them would need to maintain it. We would need some type of agreement with West Newton Borough or trail group to remove the center line device (and edge line device if we didn't go with flashing warning device) in the winter and then reinstall it in the spring. Plus replace the devices should they be damaged. Also would probably want them to maintain any pavement markings. But if doing a flashing warning device that could all be part of the flashing warning device permit which would have to be with West Newton Borough. The AASHTO website provides some good information on this including the aforementioned webinar, a technical memo, and Michigan's user guidance. As part of the webinar a representative from Florida DOT spoke and they do something similar to the above pictures but the layout and number of signs is different. (If looking at webinar go to about 1 hour mark for Florida DOT presentation) Here is the link. [AASHTO - AASHTO Innovation Initiative - Pedestrian Gateway Treatment \(transportation.org\)](https://www.aashto.org/innovation/initiative-pedestrian-gateway-treatment) [\[aai.transportation.org\]](https://aai.transportation.org/jgcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com)

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

In summary I think we can do something that will help improve this busy pedestrian crossing on SR 136.

From: Walker, Bryan P <brywalker@pa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 1, 2021 10:11 AM
To: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Cc: Zarichnak, Emily <emzarichna@pa.gov>
Subject: RE: SR136 C10 (West Newton Bridge) - Flashing Warning Device

Barry,

Brandon Kalp received an email from Vaughn Neill, Westmoreland County Engineer, about this crossing. They would like to explore upgrading the crossing. Am I allowed to discuss with him the improvements that Trans is exploring?

Bryan P. Walker, P.E. | District Traffic Engineer
PA Department of Transportation
Engineering District 12-0
825 North Gallatin Avenue | Uniontown, PA 15401
Phone: 724.439.7345
brywalker@pa.gov

From: Walker, Bryan P
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 2:18 PM
To: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Cc: Zarichnak, Emily <emzarichna@pa.gov>
Subject: RE: SR136 C10 (West Newton Bridge) - Flashing Warning Device

Barry,

After looking at this, I think we are fine with proceeding with the ideas shown on sheets 9 and 10. Basically, the improved signage, pavement markings, advance pavement legends, and pedestrian actuated RRFB. They threw out a lot of ideas in that report, and we don't want a lot of that stuff (raised crossing, lights in the pavement, etc.) We also do not want to have a 24/7 flashing beacon because I feel those lose their effect as time goes on.

To answer your question, I don't think we need to have a meeting at this point. I think if they pursue these ideas further and have questions, we could meet then.

Bryan P. Walker, P.E. | District Traffic Engineer

From: Brian A. Krul <bakrul@transystems.com>
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 3:56 PM
To: Lyons, Barry V <blyons@pa.gov>
Subject: [External] West Newton GAP Trail Crossing

Barry –

Attached is the Safety Improvement Recommendations for GAP Trail Crossing with SR 0136. This is draft copy for District review and comment. Our next step would be to have an in-person meeting (or virtual) to discuss the recommendations.

Brian



STAKEHOLDER MEETING

9-27-2021



TranSystems
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**WEST NEWTON BRIDGE
ECMS #E03885; BMS # 64-0136-0050-1938
SR 0136 OVER YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER IN WEST NEWTON BOROUGH, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PA
GAP TRAIL CROSSING / SR 136 MEETING MINUTES**

DATE/TIME: September 27, 2021
PLACE: Regional Trail Corporation Office, West Newton, PA
AUTHOR: TranSystems

ATTENDEES:

Barry Lyons – PennDOT
Brian Krul – TranSystems
Louis Friedemann – West Newton Public Works louis.friedemann@yahoo.com
Leslie Pierce – Regional Trail Corporation regionaltrails@comcast.net

PURPOSE:

Meeting to discuss the GAP Trail Crossing at SR 136 recommendations, including maintenance responsibilities.

- Barry and Brian discussed the West Newton GAP Trail Crossing / SR 136 Report and identified several options / recommendations for the crossing that would improve overall safety and awareness, as well as reducing vehicular speeds at the existing crossing. The following improvements are recommended for the GAP Trail / SR 136 crossing:
 - Advanced bicycle signage on both approaches
 - Shared lane markings along SR 136 on both approaches
 - Advanced yield markings and yield signage on both approaches
 - Updated crosswalk pavement markings and ADA facilities
 - Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) on each shoulder (self-actuated and solar powered)
 - Gateway treatments that features R1-6 yield signs at both ends of the crosswalk and a flexible delineator post or R1-6 yield sign between travel lanes
 - Updated crosswalk and ADA facilities across Collinsburg Road
- The improvements and recommendation presented above would replace what currently exists. Both Lou and Leslie were in favor of the above recommendations and agreed to move forward. Brian to contact Lou to see what is required for the next West Newton Borough Council Meeting so Lou can present and get council approval. No approvals needed from the Regional Trail Corporation as Leslie agrees to these above items but will run it past her board.
- Any new device such as the RRFB would be permitted to the West Newton Borough for ownership and maintenance. Lou was not aware that the existing devices were maintained by Borough as he previously contacted PennDOT to have them replaced since they are not working. It was mentioned that traffic signals in West Newton are also a Borough responsibility.
- The Gateway treatments would need to be removed in the winter for plowing purposes. This would be the responsibility of the Boro.

- Some recommendations that will not be pursued include raised crosswalks, lights in the pavement, and bump-outs.
- ADA ramps will be upgraded as best as possible. Existing grades and profiles limit what can be done. There may be more options on the western side; eastern side limited because of grades and Simeral Square. Once ADA ramps are designed, we can discuss with Ben Markle who represents Simeral Square and the Borough. TS had preliminary investigated a switchback ADA ramp near Simeral Square – this will be further investigated knowing that there will be some impacts to the Simeral Square property.
- The next step in the process is for TS to complete the Line and Grade and determine roadway improvements.

Other Items Discussed

- Discussed Ben Markle's' previous request to install sidewalk along SR 136 to Rite Aid. A sidewalk maintenance agreement will be required for the sidewalk on the bridge. Lou noted the Borough currently cleans the snow in the winter; so if the sidewalk is extended, the maintenance agreement would need to cover this. Following the meeting, we went out and field reviewed with Borough who would need to approve. Based on a quick review, it looks feasible to tie it from existing ramp from Bridge to first driveway access to Rite Aid but there is an existing drainage inlet/culvert that needs replaced. Any further extension gets much more complex with utility poles, grades, impacts to three parking spaces and potential impact to Rite Aid Sign. Per DM2 chapter 6 (minimum sidewalk width is 5 feet but may reduce to 4 feet if providing passing areas every 200 feet). So could go to 4 feet but may impact parking spaces. TS to investigate and then discuss with Borough and Ben and combine this with ADA meeting. Before meeting with Borough and Ben we would need to determine from PennDOT whether the Borough would need to participate in any of costs as funding is 80% Federal and 20% State.
- Noted to group that we cannot widen the bridge to add wider sidewalk based on age of structure and our goal to try and reduce weight.
- Noted that we can replace the existing highway lighting and Lou asked if could be LED. Currently PennDOT pays for the lighting but that is not the current policy. As a result, to continue to have lighting Borough will need to assume cost for maintaining lighting. Barry to follow up with Maintenance on the current costs are for lighting on this bridge. Any decorative lighting would likely need to be paid for by the Borough as we could only replace standard lighting

I believe these minutes accurately reflect the items discussed at the subject meeting. If there are any revisions or corrections to these minutes, please contact the undersigned within ten (10) days of receipt of these minutes. If no revisions or corrections are requested, the minutes will stand approved as submitted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian A. Krul".

Brian A. Krul, PE, PTOE